CONCLVSIONS VPON DANCES, BOTH OF THIS AGE, AND OF THE OLDE.

Newly composed and set forth,
by an Out-landish
Doctor.

By Jhon Lowin writ
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CONCLVSIONS
VPON DANCES:
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AND OF THE
OLDE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE RIGHT Honorable Lord, my Lord DENNIE.

MY LORD, when I make a dedication of some writing of mine, it is not for to follow the common and ordinarie proceedings of other writers: but onely because I see such a deed to haue beene effected by the Euangelist S. Luke, which dedicated his writings to

that great man, most Honorable Theophilus. *The certainty wherof doth manifestlie appeare about the beginning of his Gospell, as also in the entrance of his other booke, commonly called,* The Acts of the Apostles. *And now I dedicate these my Conclusions vpon dances to your Lordship, because I was once mooued to speake of them in your Lordships companie: which matter I could not then handle so pertinently in speach, as I can at this time in ink and paper. Thus in* London, *with my praier to God for you, my Lord, the 23. of* Nouember. 1606.

Your Lordships

humble seruant

I. L. Roscio.

THE PRINTER TO the Reader.

LEt mee now entreate thee, courteous & tractable Reader, not to stay thy minde vpon the word, Dances: but to make thy recourse thoowt the matters, which are deduced vnder that title. For what cause? Otherwise the subiect of this purpose, as I thinke, shall seeme vnto thy iudgement, to be vaine and friuolous, whereas of it selfe, it is altogether serious, and of a great moment. Heare mee a little. The Author of this Treatise concerning Dances, doth not lay the foundation of his arguments vpon his owne opinion, nor vpon the fantasticall imaginations of some others: but vpon the word of GOD it selfe, which is comprehended in the Holy Bookes of the Olde and Newe Testaments.

The which thing may verie plainely be discerned, by the vnion, or congruitie of this small Treatise, being not framed according to the pleasure of the eye, but for the comfort of the heart: In which comfort these holy men and women (which he hath named, and before our eyes heere erected) magnified the most mightie Creator of all visible and inuisible creatures, holding it to bee their dutie, not onely priuately to laud and reioyce in him for the victories they receiued: but also to stirre vp the people (which they ruled,) by the actiuenes and agilitie of their bodies in Dances, to praise and laud the immortall worker of their triumphs. Therefore bee thou instructed by the doctrine heerein contained: and the Lord haue thee alwaies vnder his protection.

Your friend

IOHN ORPHINSTRANGE.

CONCLVSIONS VPON DANCES, BOTH OF THIS AGE AND OF THE OLD.

Three diuers opinions of learned men, concerning Dances.

GReat is the diuersitie of opinions about the vsage of dances, euen as it is about a thousand other matters of no slender importance. Some men of good vnderstanding and litterature, doe affirme dances to bee holy of themselues: and their chiefe allegation regardeth the sixt Chapter of the second booke of *Samuel*, where it is written, that the Prophet *Dauid* danced before the Arke of the Lord, when it was carried from the house of *Obed-Edom* to the Citie of *Dauid*, with shouting and sound of Trumpet. Many others doe maintaine, that such an exercise is prophane: and doe principally inferre out of the

32. chapter of *Exodus*, that the corrupted *Israelites* did dance in their idolatrie about the molten Calfe, which they compelled *Aaron* to make. But after the iudgement of the greater number, it is a thing altogether indifferent: and their higheſt argument doth embrace one ſpeech of Chriſt in the 7. chap. of the Goſpell according to Saint *Luke*, which is this, *They are like vnto little children ſitting in the market place, and crying one to another, and ſaying, Wee haue piped vnto you, and ye haue not danced: wee haue mourned vnto you, and you haue not wept.* Let the hearers and readers open their mindes vnto vs, or vnto others, vpon ſuch diuerſities.

It may eaſily be perceiued, in marking ſome places of the Old and New Teſtaments, that the holineſſe, prophanation, and indifferencie of dances, muſt be conſidered vpon the cauſes of dancing. Wherefore wee are minded to ſet downe, by the permiſſion of the Almightie, ſome inſtructiue obſeruations touching that purpoſe.

Of

Of the Dances vsed in the *Old Age, and formerly of* the holy.

THat Dance was holy, which, as wee read in the 15. chap. of *Exodus*, was effected by *Miriam* the Propheteſſe, ſiſter of *Aaron* and *Moſes*, with all the other *Iſraelitiſh* women, when God had miraculouſly deſtroyed their deadly foes the *Aegyptians*, to wit, King *Pharao* and his mightie hoſte, in ouerthrowing and drowning them all at once in the red Sea. For they danced in ſinging prayſes vnto God for their deliuerance: and ſo the cauſe of their dancing was godly, and conſequently the dance it ſelfe was holy. That Dance was holy likewiſe, which the Scripture ſheweth vs in the 11. chap. of *Iudges*, when *Iptah* had vanquiſhed his aduerſaries the *Ammonites*, and returned to his houſe: which *Ammonites* had beene verie cruel oppreſſors of the *Iſraelits* eighteen years.

For the daughter of *Iaphtah* with her companions went out to meete her father, and danced in magnifying the Lord, becauſe he had giuen him the victorie ouer his enemies.

Is not the like argument to be framed vpon the like ſubiect, in the 18. chap. of the firſt book of *Samuel*? VVe ſee there, how that the women of *Iſrael* came out of all their Cities, to honour *Dauid* returning from the ſlaughter of *Goliath* the Philiſtim: and how that they danced in giuing glorie to the Almightie, becauſe hee had auenged his people *Iſrael* of their foes the *Philiſtims*, which were ſlaundering and blaſpheming idolaters. And the 15. Chapter of the booke of *Iudith* doth confirme this matter of dancing, in that it manifeſteth the *Dances* of that moſt vertuous, godly, and valiant widow *Iudith*, after ſhe had ſaued the Citie of *Bethulia*, and diſcomfited the *Perſians*, *Medes*, and all the reſt, by ſmiting off, with her heroicall hand, the head of *Olofernes*, chiefe Captaine of *Nabuchodonoſor* King of the *Aſſyrians*.

Vpon

Vpon what occasions, in the *Old Age, the dances were* vsed.

NOw euerie man may learne by those premisses, that the godly women of *Israell* did dance publikly, after some great victorie, in praysing and glorifying the name of the Lord for the same: and that they did not vse that kinde of exercise with any minde toward some worldly pleasure. But was it onely about victories? It was also about the celebration of some solemne feast consecrated vnto God: as we haue the example thereof in the 21. Chap. of *Iudges*. For the Elders of *Israel* hauing no wiues for two hundreth men of *Beniamin*, bad them goe to *Shiloh*, where a feast of the Lord was celebrated euery yeare: saying, Goe and lye in wait in the Vineyards, and when ye see the daughters of *Shiloh* come out to dance in Dances, then come yee out of the Vineyardes, and catch you euery

man a wife of the daughters of *Shiloh*, and goe into the land of *Beniamin*. So ye may clearely see, that the vsage of dancing was not onely ordained for victories, but also for solemne feasts: and that a conclusion may be gathered out of it, to be lawfull to reioyce with dances, at the time of mariages, and of all other holy and great occasions. But it were meete and conuenient, ye should alwaies remember one thing: that whensoeuer the occasions of dancing are holy, then the forme of dancing ought to represent holinesse, as the indifferent doe require indifferencie: the discerning whereof must be left to the iudgement of godly and well learned persons.

Wee doe not adde to this place the historie contained in the sixt chap. of the second booke of *Samuel*, which saith, That the Prophet *Dauid* danced before the Arke of God: because a doubt may rise thereupon, whether that motion of *Dauid* was a dance, or not. For as in the 82. *Psalme*, and in other doctrines of the holy Bible, Princes and Magistrates are called Gods, because in a manner they bee like vnto God: so that motion of *Dauid* might be taken in the number of dances, because it had some likenesse with them. What is that, which compelleth

pelleth vs to argue in this sort? I pray you, hearken a little. Dances are motions composed with measure: but that motion of *David* was without measure: as it is not difficult to be comprehended, in that he discouered himselfe before his maids, whereupon hee was mocked of his wife *Michal*. What might haue beene the cause of such a motion in him? His minde was transported and carried away, through the great vehemencie of the burning zeale, wherewith hee was altogither inflamed.

Of the Vnlawfull Dances, *which are commonly called* prophane.

AS touching prophane *Dances*, that *Dance* which the Apostle Saint *Matthew* in the 14. Chapter of his Gospell, writeth to haue beene danced before *Herod* by the daughter of *Herodias*, may be a sufficient testimoniall. There it clearely appeareth to all persons endued with some discretion, that in her Dance

ſhe had no regard vnto God, but onely vnto *Herod*: that ſhe might moſt excellently pleaſe the ſaid *Herod*, to the intent that he ſhould make her ſome extraordinarie high promiſe, whereby ſhe might purchaſe to her ſelfe the head of Saint *Iohn Baptiſt*, for to carrie it to her mother *Herodias*, which did hate that good Prophet with a deadly hatred. And wee conclude thereupon, that euery dancer and danceresſe, which in their dances haue no remembrance of God, are greatly culpable before the eyes of God himſelfe, although they ſeeme to be without fault in the ſight of men.

Wee do not bring hither the dancing mentioned in the 23. Chap. of *Exodus*: becauſe thoſe ſtubborn and ſtiffehearted *Iſraelites*, which danced about the molten Calfe, were become Idolaters. For it might be in that conſideration, that ſuch dances were part of their religion.

Of

Of such Dances, as by reason are esteemed to *be indifferent.*

BVt for the indifferencie of *Dances*, wee haue the 15. Chapter of the *Euangelist S. Luke*: where our Sauiour *Iesus Christ* speaking of the Prodigall Sonne, which had wasted abroad all his portion of Goods, and afterward was returned to his Father, with humble confession of his offence, sayth in good part, & in the narration of a godly deed, that they made great mirth for his sake in the house, with Bankets, Melodie, and *Dances*. And there that indifferencie of *Dancing*, is to be more plainely seene in these wordes, *Let vs eate, and be merrie.* King *Salomon* among many indifferent things, which he setteth down for our instruction, in the 3. Chapter of his *Ecclesiastes*, doeth also teach vs this: *That as there is a time to mourne, so there is a time to Dance.* And such a thing may also serue vs heere, for the proofe of the indifferencie of

Dances: concluding beſides that, by the laſt example and doctrine now deduced, that it is not any action diſpleaſant vnto God, to vſe *Dances* for an honeſt recreation, in the ioyfull meetings of faythfull friendes, or deare kinsfolkes; and in all other occaſions like vnto that ſame.

Wee do not vſe heere, that compariſon of the little Children, inuiting other little Children to *Dance*, comprehended in the 7. Chap. of the Goſpell according to *S. Luke*, which compariſon the Lord *Ieſus* vttered for himſelfe, and for the Prophet *S. Iohn Baptiſt*, againſt the *Phariſes* and Expounders of the Law. For it is well knowen euery where, that many thinges are to be tollerated in Children, which are not to be tollerated in other perſons: as the ryding vpon Stickes, and the playing with Babies; with ſuch other fooliſh paſtimes.

What ſort of Dancing is more *conuenient for the health.*

AMong the indifferent *Dances*, thoſe *Dances* as we thinke, muſt be numbred, which are practiſed for the exerciſe of the body, that thereby the bodily health may be better preſerued. Wher-

fore in regarding the diuersitie of disposition, which is founde at all times in the humaine kinde, it will not bee amisse, to set downe one worde in this purpose, to declare what sort of *Dancing* is more conuenient for those, and what for those.

Such *Dances* as doe strongly stirre the body, ought to be chosen of them, which haue some obstructions in the wayes of the Vrine, or some other like impediment. And the contrarie must be vsed of such persons, as doe perceiue their owne Braines to be weake, or the like infirmitie to be in some other part. But to the others that Dancing is fitter, which exerciseth the bodie in a meane measure of agitation. Therefore let all those persons, which doe ordinarily exercise them selues in *Dances*, carefully obserue and regard the constitutions of their bodyes: to the intent, that they should not vse any kind of *Dancing*, which by repugnancie might be hurtfull to their complxions: Remembring assidually within them selues, and so much the more in this matter, to acknowledge God to be the Author of all good thinges: because the Apostle *S. Paul* in the 4. Chap. of his first Epistle to *Timotheus* doth condemne the bodily exercise, when it is not accompanied with godlines.

Of the ordinarie Dances, vſed *euerie where, in theſe dayes.*

NOw that we haue handled the *Dances* of the old Age, ſhall wee make euident in few lines, what wee thinke of the *Dances* of our dayes? Theſe *Dances* (I ſpeake of the greater part of them) doe ſeeme vnto our iudgement, to be partly vaine, and partly prophane. Vaine, becauſe neither men nor women are able to attaine vnto the knowledge and practiſe of the art of ſuch *Dancing*, without vexation of the Spirit, and loſſe of time. Prophane, becauſe in the old age, the women *Danced* to this intent, that thereby their ſpirituall Songes and Diuine prayſes ſhould waxe more feruent; and conſequently become more acceptable vnto GOD: wheras now very often, in a great many places, among the Chriſtians them-ſelues, not onely the Women, but alſo the Men, doe *Dance* to pleaſe the world. Notwithſtanding God alone is hee, which ſeeth their heartes and intentions: and without difficultie it may be, that our con-

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iectures are not ſufficiently iudicious.

The vexation of the Spirit is ſo much ſpoken againſt, by that wiſe *Salomon* in his Booke of *Eccleſiaſtes*, that it is a wonderfull thing, to ſee ſo many, & ſo many againe, that neuer keepe themſelues from the tearing clawes of that monſter. And the loſſe of Time, might be better auoyded, if men would but note the admonition of the Apoſtle *S. Paul*, in the 5. Chap. of his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, where hee biddeth them *Redeeme the time*: when hee admoniſheth them, *To walke circumſpectly, not as Fooles; but as Wiſe, and to vnderſtand what the will of the Lord is.*

Moreouer, many of theſe *Dances* are ſo much artificiall (at the leaſt within our cogitations, and within the cogitations of ſome other perſons, which haue alſo obſerued in the holy Hiſtories of the old Teſtament, the manner of *Dancing* practiſed among the *Iſraelitiſh* women, that liued in the feare of God) many of theſe *Dances* (I ſay) are ſo much artificiall, that the humaine mindes can not be intended nor attentiue to the Art of *Dancing*, and to the prayſe of God together.

Whether it bee lawfull for men to dance with women.

MAny men doe argue, that it is lawfull for them, to dance with women: because (say they) the Prophet *Dauid* exhorteth vs in one of his *Psalmes*, to praise God in *Dances*. But that argument cannot bee strong enough. For besides that the *Hebrewe* word doth carry diuers significations, the later and riper Translations, both in *English* and in other Languages, doe not name any *Dance*. Therefore we would rather counsell them to take an other way, and sende them to that Text of the Prophet *Ieremie* in the 31. Chapter. *The Virgine shall reioyce in the Dance, and the yong men and the olde men together: for I will turne their mourning into ioy, & will comfort them, and giue them ioy for their sorrowes.*

Heere many others do endeuour themselues, to make an opposition in this manner. As the flowing of milke and hony (say they) is taken in the Scripture, for the aboundance of all things neces-

neceſſary to the humane life; ſo the *Dance* is put in that Text for the greatnes of ioy. But let them marke, or remember one thing: The wordes muſt be vnderſtood in an other ſenſe, when they are repugnant vnto reaſon: but the word *Dance*, is not repugnant vnto reaſon, in that text of *Ieremie* aboue recited.

To what eſtates the Dances are thought to be more becomming.

IF wee will but marke meanely well a little part of the 15. Chap. of *Exodus* alreadie mentioned, it ſhall be ſufficiently manifeſt vnto vs, that the *Iſraelitiſh* women *Danced* with *Miriam* the Propheteſſe, for that they were mooued and brought to it by the ſayd *Miriam*, which began to *Dance*, and was the leader of them. Whereby wee ſhall remaine fully perſwaded, that thoſe women did not embolden themſelues towardes that exerciſe, in the preſence of her, which was aboue them in dignitie, vntill they were bidden and inuited to it by her example.

And

And this doth cauſe the opinions of many Learned men to be, that ſuch an exerciſe is rather appertayning to the Nobilitie and Gentilitie, then to the other eſtates: and that the inferiours ought not to vſe it among the ſuperiours, nor in the preſence of them, except the ſuperiours doe bidde or inuite the inferiours to the ſame, whether it be by ſpeach, or otherwiſe. Concluding thereupon, that ſame Art to be much abuſed in our age, becauſe (ſay they) it is practiſed by a great many, without any diſcretion at all.

Let vs giue ſome inſight to a few words of the 11. Chap. of *Iudges*, which wee haue alledged in another line of this Treatiſe. No mention is made of any perſon in thoſe Dances, but of the daughter of *Iephtah*, which was Captaine ouer the people of *Iſrael*. Doth not this argue with great probabilitie, that the ſaid daughter of *Iephtah*, was the moouer and guider of that dancing, as ſhee was the higheſt in eſtate and condition among her fellowes? And doth it not by conſequence come to agree with that purpoſe, which now we haue holden in a brief deduction, a very little before, about the dauncing of *Miriam* the Prophetеſſe with the other women of *Iſrael*? None extraordinarie ſharpneſſe, or vivacitie of wit is neceſſarie, to make it enter into

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the comprehenſion of that poinct.

We haue already touched the fiftenth chapter of the Booke of *Iudeth*, which wee muſt touch againe at this preſent time, vpon the diſcourſe which we haue in hand. For theſe words are written in the end of it, concerning the ſayde moſt honorable *Iudeth*, *They alſo crowned her with Olives, and her that was with her, and ſhee went before the people in the* Dance, *leading all the Women.* Which words do greatly augment, without any part of doubt, the ſtrength and vigour of our argumentation: to wit, that the *Dances* do not ſeeme to become ſo well the lower ſort, as the higher: and that we may thinke according vnto reaſon, to be ſomewhat inconvenient for the lower, to haue the exercitation of dancing neere the higher, vnleſſe ſome leaue be giuen of theſe vnto thoſe, one way or other. And hereunto this very ſhort addition, as we do perſwade our ſelues, cannot bee but fitly applyed: that by the Hiſtories of dances contained in the holy Scripture, it ſeemeth vnto the conſideration of many godly perſons, that the practiſe of *Dancing* is more becomming vnto women, then vnto men.

Why

Why Dances are forbidden in some *places among the Christians.*

THe prohibition of *Dances* in *Geneua*, & in some other Territories, which do keepe all the orders of the same in matters of Religion, and Ecclesiasticall Discipline, was made because of the great abuses of them: to cut off the pernicious euils, which oftentimes happened thereby. Is not this a sufficient argument, to proouue such an action to be good? Behold, our *Messias* in the 18. Chap. of the Gospel according to *S. Matthew*, doeth command euery one of vs, to cast away his hand, or his foote, or his eye: if they cause him to offend: saying, that it is better, to enter into life, with one hand, or with one foote, or with one eye, then hauing two hands, or two feete, or two eyes, to be cast into euerlasting fire. Therefore if in that case we must needs be depriued of things, which are so much profitable & necessarie: why should those nations haue refused to suppresse a thing, which among them was become altogether

vaine and prophane?

Wee read in the *21.* Chap. of *Numbers*, that *Moſes* by the commandement of God, did make a Serpent of Braſſe, and erected it for a ſigne vnto the *Iſraelites*. And we read in the *18.* Chap. of the ſecond Booke of *Kings*, that the religious King *Hezekiah* did beat downe, and breake in peeces the ſayd Braſen Serpent, becauſe he ſaw that the people of *Iſrael* continued yet to adore the ſame, in burning Incenſe vnto it. If then it haue been lawfull, to aboliſh the Sacrament of God, in conſideration that it was abuſed; why ſhould it not be lawfull, to put away the inuentions of men for the like cauſe?

Mee thinketh it were enough, to make vs leaue and forſake the vſage of ſuch *Dances*, as are onely effected for the pleaſure of our eyes, to obſerue and conſider with ſtudious diligence one thing in the 14. chap. of the Apoſtle *S. Matthew*, How that through the meanes & occaſion of a *Dance*, *S. Iohn Baptiſt* was put to death: which was a moſt excellent Prophet, & a moſt faythfull forerunner of our Sauiour *Ieſus Chriſt*. To whom, with the *Father*, and the *Spirit*, be all magnificence, and glorie perpetually. *Amen.*

FINIS.